



Focus on Food Safety

Guidelines for the Use of Outdoor Smokers, Grills, and Cookers

A portable outdoor cooker may be considered an appurtenance to an otherwise licensed seller of food. The cooked food must be offered for sale from or in conjunction with a licensed food service facility. Such an arrangement must provide portable cooker personnel convenient access to those necessary facilities such as dishwashing, refrigeration, toilet, and hand-washing. Operations such as bars and concession stands which do not have adequate facilities do not meet this requirement. Under these conditions the portable cooker is owned and/or operated by the license holder. The license holder is the responsible party.

A private vendor that wants to operate in a grocery store, must comply with applicable food service establishment regulations. Adequate and convenient facilities must be provided. The requirements are no different than if the grocery wanted a food service license. A license would be required.

When the operation intent is to sell from a free-standing location and not described as above the portable outdoor cooker must meet the food service establishment rules and regulations for mobile units or temporary stands, depending on which apply.

***Note:** *A temporary food service establishment means a food service establishment that operates at a fixed location for a period of time of not more than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration. The license is only valid for the one event. The operation of the portable cooker, preparation and serving areas must comply with all applicable food service establishment regulations. A portable outdoor cooker or smoker is only a piece of equipment and would not by itself be licensable.*

The regulatory authority may impose additional requirements to protect against health hazards

related to the conduct of the food service establishment as a mobile unit or temporary unit and may prohibit the sale of some or all potentially hazardous foods.

The cooker must be placed on an impervious surface such as asphalt or concrete, which is well drained, kept clean, and dust minimized.



Food must be protected from contamination during transportation, storage, preparation, service, and sale. Protection at the cooker may be provided by the inclusion of overhead protection with side walls and side wall screening with storm flaps available. Protective materials may be of tent type construction materials, or more substantial materials selected by the vendor and approved by the health department. A totally enclosed cooker and covered food containers used to transport food to and from the cooker may also be considered adequate protection under normal circumstances. Inclement weather would require additional protection. The cooking surface must be constructed of acceptable food contact materials and designed and constructed in such a way as to be removable for washing, rinsing & sanitizing.

Containers used to transport raw products must not be used to transport cooked products unless they are first washed, rinsed and sanitized.

